



# News Release

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## Prepare for takeoff! Hoodoo Meadows added to backcountry airport roster this summer

[Hoodoo Meadows Airstrip](#), located in Lemhi County in the Salmon-Challis National Forest, will become part of the Idaho Transportation Department's Division of Aeronautics (Aero) stable of backcountry airstrips this summer, bringing the number of [remote airstrips throughout the state to 32](#).

Idaho's main aviation user groups -- Idaho Aviation Association (IAA) & Recreational Aviation Foundation (RAF) -- will fund and hire a contractor to clear the existing runway area of vegetation and tree in-growth in preparation for use by pilots and recreational user groups. The runway has become overgrown with vegetation during the last four decades due to the lack of a formal maintenance program.

There are some significant benefits to maintaining Hoodoo and designating it as a backcountry airstrip available to the public:

- It allows the public to access public lands.
- It serves as an entry point into the backcountry for sportsmen and hikers to streams, lakes and trails, taking pressure off other areas.
- It is a safety benefit, allowing access in an emergency landing/forced weather landing situation, and allowing for better response to emergency rescue or recovery situations.
- It increases accessibility to all including the disabled, medically limited population.

Hoodoo Meadows Airstrip was originally built in 1936 and abandoned in 1985 due to lack of maintenance and unpredictable afternoon winds at a high elevation (8,200 feet). Despite this, there were no accidents recorded during the nearly 50 years it was in service and open to the public. The runway is 2,200 feet long and about 150 feet wide – more than sufficient to accommodate takeoffs and landings.

Idaho Department of Fish & Game, Idaho Division of Aeronautics, and the United States Forest Service started the process of re-establishing maintenance at the airstrip in 2016. Efforts to maintain Hoodoo were shelved as the project was embroiled in budgetary discussions and scope-of-work questions. In early 2020, Aero renewed efforts to address Hoodoo and maintain it as an Idaho backcountry airstrip. The Division of Aeronautics will provide continuing maintenance to the Hoodoo airstrip.

Approval to move forward with adding Hoodoo to Aero's backcountry stable was granted by the Idaho Transportation Board in April 2021 following recommendation by the Aeronautics Advisory Board. A Special Use Permit granting the go-ahead on the project was signed by the Forest Service on March 3 of this year. A follow-up request to Dept. of Environmental Quality to determine if a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Permit was required was answered on May 11, stating that it was not needed to re-establish maintenance.

Check out the [Hoodoo Meadows webpage](#) for details, FAQs, and project supporters.

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